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How does print advertising in newspapers make use of and contribute to the framing and public understanding of environmental issues?

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Abstract

This project is an example of visual critical discourse analysis, taking a multimodal approach to its research. It investigates how institutional advertising campaigns frame environmental issues, and in particular how print advertisements in British newspapers can be said to contribute to the public's understanding of anthropogenic climate change. This was done by examining two print advertising campaigns from Apple and BMW, published in the UK during the last ten years. These campaigns made use of images of the natural world and pro-environmental rhetoric as part of the marketing of the associated corporations. Examples of recent advertising practice found elsewhere were also analysed to contextualise the two primary texts. The findings overall reflect and support results of previous research – that recontextualised images of nature are used to sustain discourses in favour of consumption, drawing attention away from its consequences. However, this project also argues that discourses supporting a more balanced, interdependent relationship between humankind and the natural world are present, in contrast to the findings of previous research.

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Introduction: How does print advertising in newspapers make use of and contribute to the framing and public understanding of environmental issues?

"How do we bring home […] threats that take time to wreak their havoc, threats that will never materialize on one spectacular, explosive, cinematic scene?" Rob Nixon (2011, p. 15).

"Discursive practices shape how we perceive climate change and what kinds of actions are undertaken." Julie Doyle (2011, p. 6).

Awareness of environmental issues and climate change had been steadily growing in the United Kingdom since the 1980s (Dobson, 1990; Yearley, 1991), before the 21st century saw a "substantial increase", in media coverage of the environment (Doyle 2011, p.28). As well as being a near ever-present topic in the news, our changing climate has increasingly dominated popular media (Cubitt, 2005; Sakellari, 2014). Themes of anthropogenic damage to our environment have increasingly pervaded the films and television programmes we watch, the books we read, and the rhetoric of our politics (ibid., 2014). It's not difficult to see why. In 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change declared that climate change was "unequivocal", with strong evidence of anthropogenic causes (IPCC, 2007 p. 30). Meanwhile, studies from as recently as July of 2018 only support the longstanding certainty amongst scientists that humans are causing increasingly prominent changes to our environment (World Weather Attribution, 2018).

And yet, despite this apparently growing awareness, and unanimous agreement amongst climate scientists that we are facing a crisis, the British public remains uncertain and ill informed on the long-term global impacts of human activity. These impacts continue to

go largely unnoticed, and misunderstood (Cox, 2006; Nixon, 2011; WorldWatch Institute, 2010). It would appear that on top of climate change and environmental pollution, we face a crisis of communication.

This project explores how our understanding of environmental issues such as climate change is affected by, and reflected in the content of, print advertisements containing "green" messages. In order to do this, the project uses a multimodal critical discourse analysis of the visual and textual content of a range of advertisements found in British news publications from the past ten years. By examining the ways in which they employ pro-environmental, "green" messages encouraging more ecological behaviour, and use images of the natural world, this project discusses the ways in which these advertisements could be said to contribute to the framing, and the public's understanding of these issues. It argues that through this mediation of our environment, these advertisements perpetuate the on-going problems of an "imaginative dilemma" - misleading and inaccurate representations dictating how we understand these issues (Nixon 2011). However, it will also argue that contrary to other forms of visual environmental communication, there is evidence here of a more instructive discourse of interdependence between humankind and nature at play (Doyle, 2011). This project makes a further contribution to an on going discussion of the complexities of how climate change and other environmental issues are mediated.

Responding to a relative dearth of research done on the visual communication of climate change and environmental issues in the past decade, this investigation continues previous work on how the subject provides unique possibilities, and crucially, limitations for visual communication (Doyle 2011, p. 31). Julie Doyle's survey of research into climate change imagery in media has found it to be largely "distancing", "disempowering" and "decontextualized" (ibid. p.31). As she points out, this has historically been a problem for scientists and environmentalist journalists as it makes it far more difficult, firstly to accurately convey the urgency of environmental damage that does not occur immediately or in a spectacular way (Cottle, 2009; Doyle, 2011). And secondly, it is difficult to then galvanise the

public into taking action using forms of mass communication (ibid. 2011). This phenomenon makes up part of what is described as "Slow Violence" in Rob Nixon's seminal text of the same title. Climate change is a form of violence that remains largely invisible, especially to Western media that favours the spectacular, and is therefore allowed to continue unchecked (Nixon 2011, p. 2). While considerable research has been conducted on the problems journalists face as they attempt to convey the realities of climate change to their readers, relatively few have studied corporate adverts (Doyle, 2011; Hansen and Machin, 2008, 2013; Boykoff and Mansfield, 2008). The main aim of this project is therefore to examine whether strategic and representational problems similar to those observed in news reporting can be observed in the advertisements alongside which they are found (Nixon 2011), as previous work by Hansen and Machin and others began to study (2008, 2013).

What is meant by "green", framing and institutional advertising?

Before continuing, it is important to define some key terms of this project. The term "green" is one with a specific cultural resonance in the UK and elsewhere, built up over a number of years (Yearley 1991). Nowadays the word can be used in a range of contexts: "green" can be found as an adjective, adverb and verb - to "go green", to "buy green", to "be more green" ourselves and even "to green your home" (*The Guardian,* 2018). The term has become synonymous with "pro-environmental behavioural change", effectively encouraging people to make decisions that lessen their impact on our environment (Crompton 2012, p.2). In its common usage, the term evokes a sense of harmony between humankind and nature, especially when used to describe consumer behaviour (Motta and Palenchar, 2012). The advertisements examined in this project are therefore green, in that they are concerned with the environment, and make use of imagery and rhetoric surrounding tackling environmental issues. This project henceforth uses the term "green" as a kind of shorthand aligning discourses of consumption with a pro-environmental sentiment.

The term "framing" also has something of a broad meaning that needs clarifying. In visual communication, framing can refer literally to how an image is presented in its frame, conveying a point of view (Parry, 2010). However, extending this analysis, Parry also points to how Wolfsfeld (1997) produced a model elaborating on previous critical writing, the cultural dimension-perspective analysis of which "focuses on how norms, beliefs and routines all have influence on construction of media frames" (Wolfsfeld 1997, p. 5). In this context, the idea of framing refers to how an image can be seen as a contested site of meaning reproduction, which serves the function of conveying a specific message. In the case of this study, the presence of anchorage in the form of text superimposed onto images will necessarily heighten the sense that the image frames its subject in a certain way, with a certain ideological standpoint or message to convey (Barthes, 1977).

Cox (2006) points to how different media agents compete to influence the framing of an issue. Building on Pan and Kosicki's (1993) definition of a media frame as a "central organizing theme […] that connects different semantic elements of a news story into a coherent whole to suggest what is at issue" (p. 80), he argues that framing helps people relate issues to their own recognizable experiences, organizing their understanding of the world around them (Cox 2006, p.178). In this way, different visual media, for news, entertainment or commercial purposes could be said to influence the way we think about the environment, shaping their discourses – this includes advertising. A particularly useful addition to this definition is framing as being how we organize our "subjective involvement in social events" (Goffman, 1974; cited in: Newton 2008, p. 27). Given that climate change, and addressing it, is seen as an on going social event, and one that individuals have often found themselves feeling detached from, this definition gives a sense of how framing is especially important in this case (Doyle, 2011; Yearley, 1991). It also makes clear the link between how an issue is framed, and how this directly shapes the public's understanding. This project therefore examines how advertising contributes to the framing, and our understanding of, humankind's impact on the environment through how it reproduces visual discourses of our

relationship with the natural environment, constructing our understanding of the world and how we can interact with these.

Finally, this project focuses on institutional advertising, which, as opposed to advertising a certain product, focuses on creating a positive perception of the company to promote its reputation (Kintzel, 2016). A study by Bhanerjee et al. (1995) found that increasingly, organisations were producing advertisements that were aimed at creating a "green"-positive, pro-ecological image of themselves in their marketing, as opposed to the benefits of their specific products. Appeals to green, pro-environmental ethics and triggering the positive emotional responses caused by contact with nature are used (Hartmann et al. 2015). It would appear that, in an effort to maintain greater credibility amongst potential green consumers, organisations have in recent years made a move towards this kind of institutional advertising. This was reflected in the findings of this project – as we will see, generally organisations make use of their ads to claim good environmental practice, or more generally present a message encouraging consumers and other organisations to participate in environmentally-friendly behaviour in the future. Institutional advertising, and the ideology motivating its production, is discussed in further detail in the literature review section.

Recent research into visual communication of the environment

In 2008, a study by Hansen and Machin on Getty's most recent release of stock images for green advertising found that adverts were using decontextualized, abstracted representations of nature (foreshadowing results of Julie Doyle's research in 2011) that were too far from reality to effectively convey the threat and urgency of climate change. This was as a result of these images and discourses being appropriated for globalised capitalism and encouraging consumption. As they note, Linder (2006) also conducted a similar study of advertising that capitalised on environmental research, appropriating images of the natural world for marketing campaigns in light of new information on the risks of climate change (Linder, 2006). This was one of the few pieces of work to have been done on visual

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advertising using green messages, despite scholars of critical discourse analysis advocating greater attention paid to "how discourses are realized and disseminated visually" (Hansen and Machin 2008, p. 777), There has been very little work done on the subject since then (ibid. 2013). This project begins to fill this gap by examining advertising from the past ten years, to explore whether anything has changed since Hansen and Machin's work (discussed in greater depth in the next chapter) asserted that:

> With its considerable influence on the visual discourses of environmental issues, Getty will provide pressure groups with further competition to define the discourses and scripts that define precisely what such problems are and how we are to deal with them.

> (Hansen and Machin 2008, p. 792)

Here they describe a scenario in which environmental pressure groups are in opposition with corporations, in a battle for control over which discourses are amplified in framing environmental issues. While it is not possible for a study of this scale to only examine adverts that use Getty stock images, this project has discussed adverts from corporate organisations in the past ten years and uses examples of adverts by non-governmental pressure groups for comparison. In doing so, it also begins to answer a question left by Hansen and Machin's work: which discourses have been more effective in accurately framing climate change? This research will be briefly revisited in the literature review, along with others.

Why study print adverts? "Our everyday geographies are always already meaningful." (Ivakhiv 2013, p.71)

It is perhaps fitting that a project concerning environmental issues should focus on our environment – the physical spaces we inhabit every day. The above quotation refers to the role of the images that we receive as we go about our daily lives. Essentially, how they

inform our understanding of the world, constructing the "geographies" of our lives by which we understand the world. Ivakhiv writes that the images we see in our day-to-day lives become part of our understanding of the world around us in that "visual media interject themselves into […] this territorialisation of the everyday, in various ways" (Ivakhiv 2013, p. 71 – 2). Though his primary focus is on cinema, Ivakhiv's work here also refers to photographs seen in everyday life and is thus useful to this study as it helps to explain why the content of print advertising is so significant in this case. Ivakhiv contends that:

> "The effect of visual representations is thus to simultaneously fragment and iconicize the world: they take one piece, one image, from out of its profilmic contexts and enable that piece to circulate and to stand for the original, or for a particular understanding of the original." (ibid. p. 72)

In the newspapers we read, on the sides of the buses we take to work, covering entire walls that surround us – these images are part of our environment. They are "interjected" into our daily existence, as Ivakhiv argues, and we form our understanding of the world based on their discourses. As well as informing our understanding of the world, they are "already meaningful". It should be considered that these images are themselves constructs, with meaning and ideologies already ascribed to them before we receive them. In the last decade, Emmison's (2004, p. 255) work in the field of visual analysis similarly asserted that images should be considered within their spatial context when we examine how they function as producers of meaning. Adverts, amongst other similar texts, can be therefore be considered "a constituent feature of social life" (Emmison 2004, p. 255). Christensen et al. (2018) take Ivakhiv's point further in describing how environmental narratives such as biodiversity loss and climate change increasingly dominate today's media. They go on to argue that through the use of images of the natural world in institutional advertising, the "iconicized" locations shown become narrativized spaces, used to tell stories and carry messages bound up in ideology. Ivakhiv's work is thus also useful in understanding how

advertising could be said to frame our understanding of the environment. In the methodology section, this project will further explore the significance of how meaning is made visually.

While a similar project could likely be done on digital online media, this one examines print media; partly for the reasons stated above, and partly because a project of this scope is more effective in its analysis when examining a smaller, unified sample (Silverman, 2010). However, a potential comparative study between print and digital advertisements could be useful.

The structure of this project

In the following chapters, this project firstly contextualises its findings by providing a critical overview and discussion of relevant literature. This draws together theoretical background on some of the questions facing the mediation of environmental issues and climate change, how green institutional advertising functions, and how these issues converge in this project. It also frames this project by examining some key theoretical texts on environmentalism and the study of green visual media.

Following this is an exploration of the research methods used in this project. This section provides justification for the use of a multi-modal critical discourse analysis, and offers a critical look at how the project's data collection and analysis took place, noting potential limitations. The methods of deconstructive visual analysis used in this project were heavily influenced by Barthes' (1977) analysis of advertisements, and these methods in turn influenced the nature of the findings. This section therefore discusses how Barthes' methods help the project to explore its key themes.

Then the findings section provides an initial in-depth analysis of a sample of advertisements from two campaigns, drawing out themes and patterns, and using other examples of forms of advertising as comparisons to highlight key elements. In the following discussion section, this analysis is then linked back to the literature. This goes on to situate

these advertisements in the wider process of framing environmental issues, and influencing how we understand them as a public. Further discussion identifies key recurring themes in the findings and considers the implication of these. Finally, the conclusions section ties together the key arguments of the project, discusses how it has contributed to on-going wider conversations about the mediation of our environment, and suggests some further areas for study.

Literature review

This section provides the theoretical background to this project. It will begin by discussing studies observing the long-established issues facing environmental communication, before linking these to research done on advertising featuring green messages, and showing how more research is needed concerning visual promotional communication as a discursive practice on climate change (Doyle, 2011). Finally, it will examine some of the most recent critical work on environmental communication, and its connections to the argument of this project.

The field of environmental communication has many strands, as there are many aspects to understand (Cox, 2006). There is, therefore, a large and rapidly growing body of work reflecting the growing interest in environmental issues, across a wide range of disciplines (Hansen and Machin 2013). Initial research for this project began by examining environmental journalism, and the problems that have historically been faced by journalists and scientists attempting to convey the critical state of our environment to the public (Crompton, 2012; Short, 2012). As the project went on, it was found that the topic had been well covered, with more obvious potential for new ground to be covered in the area of visual media and advertising, in particular following a general increase in the number of studies on environmental communication (Hansen and Machin 2013; Schafer and Schlichting, 2014). Early research done thus far on this topic suggested that many of the same issues facing journalists could be observed in visual advertising media (Hansen and Machin; 2008, 2013).

Quickening slow violence: "People's emotions are stirred more quickly than their intelligence" (Hickel, 2017)

Rob Nixon's 2011 work *Slow Violence* is important for understanding one of the key problems with mediating environmental issues such as climate change: it is simply so difficult to visualise (Doyle, 2011). As Nixon writes, the ocularcentrism of Western culture and media means that seeing a phenomenon is essential for an audience or public to

comprehend it (Nixon, 2011; Rose, 2012). As pointed out by Hansen and Machin (2013), a number of studies have found that the difficulty of providing visual representations of the causes and effects of environmental problems causes them to be less well understood, or ignored (Cox, 2013; Doyle, 2007; Hannigan, 2006;). Nixon draws attention to issues of climate change as:

> …a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all (Nixon 2011, p. 2).

Here there are several difficulties described in detecting environmental issues. Firstly, it is argued that as climate change often takes place across a vast timescale, beyond human lifespans, it is difficult to translate these dangers in so succinct a form as a news report, or advert that conveys the necessary urgency with which it should be dealt (Nixon, 2011; Doyle, 2011; Crompton, 2012; Short, 2012; Hansen and Machin, 2013). Secondly, Nixon also writes that the effects of climate change are invisible in that they often occur largely imperceptibly: how, for instance, does one visualise the slight changes in temperatures in sea water that cause damage to crucial ecosystems in the Great Barrier Reef (Nixon 2011)? This example also demonstrates another sense in which environmental issues are invisible: to a British audience, climate change is largely out of sight in that the parts of the world where its effects are most strongly felt are far away. Often, these less developed parts of the world do not have the capacity to report on issues, so the violence of climate change is unequally dealt out in silence (Nixon 2011).

A key issue for Nixon, and for this study, is representation – how media can adequately convey a sense of urgency surrounding this type of violence. Many cases of environmental communication "…present formidable representational obstacles that can hinder our efforts to mobilize and act decisively" (ibid.). Echoing Hickel's (2017) point, as well as observations on environmental journalism by Boykoff (2008), and Schafer and Schlichting (2014), Nixon writes, "politically and emotionally, different types of disaster possess unequal

heft" (p. 3). This point thus reflects past scholarship on representational problems and links them to issues of globalisation and justice. Christensen (2018) argues that the sites of media production are "tightly enmeshed with and weigh in globalization and commercialization processes" (p. 1). This idea of tight enmeshment suggests that links between commercial processes and the construction of forms of environmental communication are present and should be further studied (Linder, 2006; Reilly & Larya, 2017).

There has been a great deal of analytical work done on problems in news coverage of environmental issues reflecting difficulties in communicating effectively (Boykoff & Mansfield, 2008; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Crompton, 2012; Doyle, 2011;). Carvalho and Burgess (2005) in particular produced an in depth critical discourse analysis of cultural circuits of understanding on environmental issues in news reporting. However, relatively little such research has been done on visual communication of climate change.

"The public vocabulary on the environment is to a large extent a visual vocabulary" (Hansen and Machin 2013, p.155)

More recently, there has been a growing number of studies done on visual communication of the environment (Cox, 2013; Doyle, 2011; Hannigan, 2006) Many of these recorded similar issues in representation, linking them to issues of slow violence. Hansen and Machin (2013) point out that though much of this research was valuable in furthering our understanding of the issues facing visual environmental communication, much of it can be considered superficial in terms of its analysis. Here they echo Nixon (2011) where he mentions how the visual is central to Western forms of media by arguing that the way. They described a "problematic conflation" of seeing with knowing or understanding, the already mentioned ocularcentrism of Western media adding a further conundrum to the problem of communicating climate change (Hansen and Machin, 2013; Rose, 2012). However, this project argues that this conflation between seeing and understanding should also be applied to our analysis of visual communication. That is to say, further analysis of the construction of these images is needed, beyond the difficulty in conveying environmental risk through visual

methods. This especially applies in the case of advertising media, given the potential for the analysis of the employment of "socially constructed" images of nature (Hansen and Machin 2013, p. 155). The key issues facing environmental communication in general are therefore especially pertinent in the case of visual communication. Further analysis of these problems is thus required, with a broader focus of visual media, in order for us to form a more comprehensive understanding of how visual environmental communication functions (ibid., 2013).

Studies on visual advertising campaigns produced by Greenpeace found that they were generally aimed at inciting pro-environmental change in the immediate, using urgent messages (Doyle 2011, p.64). However this approach appears at odds with the findings that environmental damage is a slow process, taking place over a timeframe stretching beyond the human imaginative capacity (Boykoff, 2008; Nixon, 2011). As a result, Greenpeace's campaign imagery has moved away from using images of the natural landscape, as images focusing on humans as agents of change, as images appealing to societal values have been more effective at engaging their audience to change their behaviour (Hartmann et al., 2015). Doyle's study does not take into account the possible implications of institutional advertising that takes a different approach.

Similarly to news coverage focusing on the spectacular, such as natural disasters or charismatic megafauna, environmental organisations often make use of shocking or striking images and messages to motivate viewers into participating in more ecological behaviour, revealing the rationale behind the use of such imagery (Doyle, 2011; Hansen and Machin, 2008). This project uses some examples of these to contrast the discourses at play in different forms of advertising. As we shall see in the findings, the institutional texts analysed exemplify rather different uses of visual discourses of nature – aimed at reassuring consumers and showing a positive outlook that gives an impression of security.

Corporate advertising, green demarketing, and greenwashing discourses

Historically, discourses of the natural world have been used in the marketing of products or services (Ahern et al., 2012; Urry,1993). Following the rise in awareness of environmental issues amongst consumers, scholars have noted that green advertising has increasingly been used by companies looking to promote their brand (Bhanerjee et al., 1995; Schmuck et al., 2015; Zinkhan & Carlson, 2013). The majority of scholarship on green advertising has focused on its effectiveness, or not, as a method of marketing – however a few works provide useful insights into how it functions in using nature to frame its discourses.

It has long been observed that imagery of nature has been heavily used in advertising (Barthes 1977; Wernick, 1991). Associations with the environment connect products and organisations ideologies of nature as being healthy, beautiful and desirable – an escape from modernity (Hansen and Machin 2013; Wernick 1991, p. 78). Recent studies involving eye-tracking have found that engaging with visual advertising containing images of natural scenes can create a positive emotional response in consumers (Hartmann et al., 2015). The purpose of advertising is often considered to sell a product, encouraging consumption (Reich & Armstrong Soule, 2016). However, surely, as Reich and Armstrong Soule argue, "To be truly green, does advertising need to encourage less consumption rather than more?" (2016, p. 441). Here they coin the term "green demarketing" to describe a certain kind of advertising that encourages lower consumption (Reich & Armstrong Soule, 2016). Advertising, it is argued, provides a key method for companies to communicate their supposed environmental values (Schmuck et al., 2015). However, the purpose of these institutional adverts is not to bring about reduced consumption, but as a preventative measure against a boycott from green consumers. It is therefore in their interest to evoke associations with natural imagery to create a positive emotional response to their brand.

Several researchers have found in the past that the use of vague, pleasant depictions of nature is generally ineffective as a method of advertising, as these ads are

often met with skepticism when used to promote institutions (Bhanerjee et al., 1995). Furthermore, studies show that for a range of reasons, many green consumers have negative perceptions of the institutions using them (Zinkhan & Carlson, 2013). However, more recent studies have shown evidence suggesting otherwise in more recent cases. When used to create what is described as "virtual nature experience" (Hartmann 2015, p.715). Here, the experience of being in contact with nature is recreated, creating positive associations of pleasure with the company (ibid. 2015). This is proposed as an effective strategy of institutional advertising (ibid. 2000)

Despite an in-depth look at how consumers engage with the green claims of institutional advertising, these studies largely fail to analyse the extent to which these mediations frame our understanding of the environment. Recalling Hansen and Machin's assertions that Getty's images for use in advertising carry discourses promoting an ideology in which the natural world is beautiful and tender, it should be remembered that the content of these adverts are constructs with the goal of promoting an ideology (Hansen and Machin, 2008).

It is important to acknowledge here the difference between the focus of this study and "greenwashing". (Matthes & Wonneberger, 2014; Parguel et al., 2015; Short, 2012). Greenwashing is certainly an issue for environmentalists, and several of the companies whose advertisements are presented in the findings could be accused of exaggerating their green credentials (Short, 2012). However, the focus of this project is not merely to ascertain who is falsely using green discourses in their advertising to appeal to consumers, but to examine how the green discourses employed in these advertising campaigns could be said to shape our understanding of the environment (ibid. 2012). This is also a useful way to demonstrate that there are multiple ideologies at play in the employment of green imagery and rhetoric, as well as images of nature in advertising (Cottle, 2000; Linder, 2006).

The implications of the discourses employed in green advertising has widely been analysed in terms of how it affects consumer perceptions and framings of institutions, but

there is a lack in recent scholarship on how it affects the framing of the natural world of which it appropriates discourse.

Key critical discourse analyses

As Hansen and Machin (2013) note, there have been a few notable exceptions to this lack of research. A small body of studies make up some examples of critical analysis and research into how discourses of the environment are employed in a range of media that are relevant to this project (Cottle, 2000; Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006; Szerszynski et al., 2006).

Both Cottle and Szerszynski et al. focused on constructed visual representations on television, with the former identifying a "crafted succession of iconic and symbolic images", forming "an almost standardized visual "lexicon"" (Cottle 2006, p. 41). Hansen and Machin take up this argument in their own discussion (2008), suggesting that this idea is useful for identifying the ideology behind the way advertisements frame their subjects, particularly in the case of the use of natural landscape imagery (Hansen and Machin 2008).

In a study of print and television adverts, Linder argued that nature imagery was a "ready symbolic referent for drawing favourable attention" (Linder 2006, p. 131) and that natural landscapes were "iconicized and aestheticized", as suggested by Cottle (2000), resonating with deep cultural discourse (Hansen and Machin, 2008, p. 156; Linders, 2006). This idea is echoed in Hansen and Machin's 2008 study of Getty stock images. As Hansen and Machin point out, these are not accidental - the deliberate construction of the environment in both these cases has ideological roots, which are found in both studies to promote consumerism (Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006).

This focus on the deliberate, ideological reproduction of nature also highlights the links between institutional advertising and slow violence (Hansen and Machin, 2008; Nixon, 2011). This can be observed in the reframing of environmental issues and drawing attention away form the real processes of consumption that cause environmental damage (Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006). Linking back to Doyle's 2011 study of visual environmental

communication, these images are thus likely to cause disempowerment and disengagement with environmental issues amongst consumers, at best, according to this research (Doyle, 2011). At worst, these advertisements are arguably complicit in perpetuating the discourses that sustain the phenomenon of slow violence to go unchecked, though it is argued in the findings of this project that other ideologies are arguably present, depending on which discourses are received – as this can vary between consumers and contexts (Hansen and Machin, 2013).

These studies, which take on the analysis of semiology and discourses of visual communications, largely informed the methods used in this project. As pointed out by Hansen and Machin (2013), all of the above studies owe much of their theoretical roots to the work of Roland Barthes – this project will follow suit, and greater discussion of these methods can be found in the next section.

Aside from a general lack of studies done on the field of visual communications, Elkins (2003) also criticised the narrow reach of our idea of what constitutes the visual (Elkins 2003). Claiming that not enough research considers all aspects of daily life and culture, this work was referred to by Hansen and Machin as they called for a broadening of our focus in our study of visual texts in daily life. (Elkins, 2003; Hansen and Machin, 2013; Ivakhiv, 2013). When Hansen and Machin wrote in response to this criticism: "there is room here to think in terms of […] the ideologies they carry" (Hansen and Machin 2013, p. 154), they invited a study such as this, widening as it does the focus of critical discourse analysis of visual environmental communication.

The current conversation

In some of the most recently published research on environmental communication, many of the same questions are still being discussed. Public engagement with environmental issues, and how to effectively communicate the urgency of climate change is still widely being covered (DiCaglio et al., 2017; Hestres, 2017; Reilly and Larya, 2017, van der Hel et al., 2017). Although the range of foci of these studies is being widened, the same

problems from up to a decade ago arise in discussion. Critics are continually looking to reframe environmental discourse and make policy recommendations on how to improve the state of environmental engagement. For example, DiCaglio et al. echo Doyle's assertion that we need to focus more on local and identifiable problems rather than "banal globalism" resulting in a lack of such focused issues, while recognising the interconnected nature of humankind and ecology (DiCaglio et al., 2017, Doyle 2011, Szerszynski et al., 2006, p. 206). Meanwhile, analysis of visual communication of the environment continues to blossom, with Kuchinskaya (2017) in particular advocating the importance of visual media to convey information in her study of air pollution awareness.

A study by Diprose et al (2017) on sustainability coverage in the national press found that framings in terms of neo-liberal ideas of sustainable consumption are more heavily emphasised over framings focused on policy and environmental social justice in newspapers. Interestingly, it was also noted in this study that this was the case across all newspapers examined, regardless of quality or politics (Diprose et al., 2017). This suggests that a response to Hansen and Machin's 2008 study of what discourses are dominant where images of the environment are used would expect to find a continuation of:

> a new phenomenon, a systematic attempt to recontextualize all issues including the
> environment to promote discourses suitable for branding and marketing. (p. 792)

These studies appeared to be in agreement that green discourses are increasingly being appropriated to serve corporate purposes and fuel greater consumption, and this in turn linked them to the phenomenon of slow violence. The findings of this latest study also suggested that Linder's (2006) findings on appropriated advertising discourses of the environment are likely to hold true. This project thus investigated the extent to which this is the case.

To briefly conclude, while there continues to be a great volume of work published on environmental communication, there is still a lack of recent scholarship on the contributions

of visual corporate advertising to the framing of environmental issues, despite a growing body of literature suggesting the usefulness for such a study, as argued above (Hansen and Machin, 2013). This section has therefore shown where this project fits in a gap in the literature on environmental communication. There is now a longstanding agreement amongst communication researchers that climate change, an invisible phenomenon, has presented problems to scientists, journalists, and media scholars trying to report on it. This is particularly problematic in the field of visual communication (Doyle, 2011; Hansen and Machin, 2013). Meanwhile, advertising researchers have presented similar findings to their media studies counterparts in work done on green advertising that suggest that these media forms similarly shape public understanding and perpetuate the discourses that frame our understanding of our environment.

This section has argued that further research focusing on visual discourses in advertising is needed in the vein of the critical discourse analysis of Cottle (2000), Linders (2006) and Hansen and Machin (2013), as while a great deal has been written on other forms of communication, the literature shows a gap where recent visual discourses in advertising are concerned. This section has also shown how the literature suggests that adverts contribute as a discursive practice to public understanding of issues. The focus of analysis should thus be broadened to include these forms in analysis.

In the next section, the methods for this project are explored – this will explain how the analysis of visual and textual elements of adverts exposed what discourses and ideologies are being promoted in these texts (Hansen and Machin, 2013).

Methodology

Choice of sample and process

The findings of this project were obtained via a multi-modal critical discourse analysis, to provide close individual readings of adverts, from two different print advertising campaigns from the past decade. As stated in the introduction, this timescale was chosen so as to examine adverts published after Hansen and Machin's previous study of images for use in advertising (Hansen and Machin, 2008). It examines publications from the UK in order to narrow the sample to one that could be managed in a project of this scope. This project took a qualitative approach to closely analyse these key examples of print adverts making use of images of the natural world, and green discourse. To re-iterate: here this term refers to messages advocating "pro-environmental behavioural change" (Crompton 2012, p.2).

This analysis was done gradually, between the months of April and July in 2018. There were multiple revisions of the analysis notes during this time, to create as detailed a reading of the adverts' discourses as possible. The visual and textual content of each advertisement was analysed closely by myself, drawing heavily on the analytical framework laid down by Roland Barthes, in his own analysis of advertisements in *The Rhetoric of the Image* (1977). As discussed in the previous section, this project sought to address the representational issues raised in *Slow Violence* (Nixon 2011). Given the links Nixon draws between the study of media discourses and combatting the negative effects of globalisation and climate injustice, the theoretical approach of this project could be described as being based in constructivism (Hickel, 2017; Nixon, 2011; Silverman, 2004).

Method of analysis: critical discourse analysis

In a formal sense, multimodal critical discourse analysis is a relatively new, emerging method of study, and was chosen as it allowed the analysis of visual as well as textual elements of advertisements (Ledin & Machin, 2017). In their study of visual mediations of the

environment for use in advertising, Hansen and Machin worked on the following theoretical basis:

> Just as we can describe the way that discourses are signified in texts through lexical and grammatical choices so we can look at the visual semiotic choices that realize these in images. (Hansen and Machin 2008, p. 778)

They argued that images, just like text, could be used to promote certain ideologies and beliefs (ibid. 2008). As this project sought to follow Hansen and Machin's studies, (and Linder's before it), it seemed appropriate to take up a similar method of analysing its subject (Hansen and Machin 2008). Their establishing a link between analysing text and images in the same way also points to a multi-modal discourse analysis being a valuable method for this project. While they sought to argue for the importance of analysing images just as closely as text, this project goes further by actually analysing the text providing anchorage to these images – many advertisements feature text as well as images, with the placement and alignment of these words contributing to the overall meaning of the ad (Barthes, 1977; Hansen and Machin, 2013; Rose, 2012; Williamson, 2002).

Until recently, research into visual environmental communication has been limited, and especially so in terms of work done on the production of visual media (Hansen and Machin 2013, p. 163). Therefore, a qualitative approach of discourse analysis made sense as a more nuanced method to address this issue, as it allowed the chance to develop an in-depth analysis, which in turn could fuel discussion on decisions on the constructions of such texts (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin, 2013; Rose 2012, p. 223;).

Barthes' *Rhetoric of the Image:* semiology, and its importance in this study

As suggested by Hansen and Machin's above mention of analysing images as semiotic texts, the methods used for analysing advertisements had their roots in Barthes' *The Rhetoric of the Image* (1977), deconstructing each advertisement in order to closely

analyse every aspect of the image and composition. In his deconstruction of a Panzani advertisement for pasta amongst others, Barthes draws out visual and textual elements and discusses a methodology for describing how they contribute to the advert's meaning. This project takes a similar approach in identifying the visual discourses of each advert (Williamson, 2002).

For Barthes, adverts are constructed of signs – the "most fundamental unit" of semiology, a unit that contains a signified concept and the signifier, the image or word attached to it. (Rose 2012, p.113). Taking each image as a text constructed of signs and discourses, this project analysed adverts to break down their visual and textual elements into signs and their meanings – as demonstrated in the findings and analysis section. It is argued that arrangements of the combined connotative meanings of signifiers produces "rhetoric thus appearing as the signifying aspect of ideology" (Barthes 1977, p.49), In this way, Barthes argues that adverts contain and convey ideology through the connotative power of the signs from which they are constructed. In this project, this ideological discourse was then critically analysed.

> The variation in readings is not, however, anarchic; it depends on the different kinds of knowledge – practical, national, cultural, aesthetic – invested in the image and these can be classified, brought into a typology (Barthes 1977, p.46)

As Barthes argues, despite being polysemous, the images found in these advertisements contain ordered meanings encoded in their composition, which can be read and analysed. The limited scale of this project did not allow for an exploration of an established visual typology of environmental imagery. However, Barthes' method of analysing advertisements is particularly useful here in that it allows us to begin to point to an emerging pattern of visual and textual cues, the beginnings of a "lexicon" (Cottle, 2000) that allows us to suggest two things. Firstly – that these advertisements make references to our established understanding of environmental issues, and secondly, that in doing so, these advertisements perpetuate

these forms of knowledge on the subject. In this way, Barthes analysis became central to answering this project's research question.

Barthes argued that the viewer, bringing specific "different kinds of knowledge" when receiving "iconic coded and non-coded messages" (Barthes 1977, pp. 34 – 45), forms their own understanding using a synthesis of this information. Understanding how thus Barthes analyses adverts is key to understanding how institutional advertising can be analysed. As shown in the findings, adverts feature "iconicized" representations of the natural world that call upon different forms of knowledge (Ivakhiv, 2013). So for these adverts to function, there must be ascribed meanings to their visual elements that the consumer is already aware of. In this way, Barthes' methods of analysing how visual advertising is key to answering one of the key questions of this project – how adverts make use of and contribute to the public's understanding of environmental issues through how these are framed: by employing signifiers that consumers recognize and form meanings and associations with.

This project thus explored how images can be read as texts (Hansen and Machin, 2008), and how these advertisements signify messages of ideologies which features a "commodification of desired practices, attempting to valorise them with cultural signs" (Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006). The extent to which this process can be said to perpetuate the phenomenon of a failure to report on the "slow violence" (Nixon, 2011) of climate change is discussed.

Using Barthes' methods of analysis of signifiers and coded messages alongside Hansen and Machin's methods of visual discourse analysis, the use of colour, perspective and framing were also explored. As shown in the following section, this analysis focused on how these advertisements make use of images of the natural world, and the way these locations are iconicized (Ivakhiv, 2013). As well as an analysis of the visual aspects of the adverts, any text featured was also analysed, both in its own content and discourse on environmental issues, and how this further contributes to the framing of these issues. This was done by examining the lexical choices and tone of the text, and how it contributed to the

anchorage of signs. Given the multimodal nature of this analysis, there was even greater scope for textual analysis as the words used form part of the image, and as we shall see, the layout and placement of the text can be considered highly significant in emphasising certain aspects of the image, and in turn which ideologies are emphasised (Parry 2010, p. 73).

Employing this methodology was particularly useful in "exposing strategies that appear normal or neutral on the surface but which may in fact be ideological and seek to shape the representation of events and persons for particular ends" (Machin 2012, p.5). By identifying the signs and "rhetoric" of ideology these advertisements employ, it is possible to critically analyse their messages.

Ethical considerations and other limitations of methods

This methodology had several limitations. Firstly, as mentioned above, the sample size of the study was relatively limited. While this was a deliberate decision made with the scope of the project in mind, it does affect how far it can be argued that the findings can be generalised. It should be remembered that there are a range of influencing factors in framing environmental discourse, as well as a vast range of channels through which we receive media (Cubitt, 2006; Doyle, 2011). With that being said, while this project can only be expected to provide a partial picture of how media representations of the natural world feed into general public understanding of environmental issues, its intent was to study a specific form of media (green, institutional print advertising) that thus far has not been studied in great detail. Therefore its contribution, though obviously limited, is a valid one, especially given that it was found that such print advertisements are relatively rare, compared with comparable forms of media found disseminated online.

Secondly, it is important to acknowledge the potential for coder bias, as the research and analysis was carried out by one person. Taking certain views, assumptions and opinions with them, which, despite an effort to be objective, will inevitably affect the findings and potentially offer a biased take on how images may be read, and their effect on an audience.

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Moreover, as Silverman (2004) notes, qualitative studies often suffer an assumption of stability in how people respond to texts – which in turn can lead to studies neglecting more nuanced considerations how people interact with these texts. So it was important to be aware of this issue, as arguably unavoidable as it was in the case of a single-coder study.

On a similar note, a third limitation to using this method as opposed to an ethnographic approach is that the latter might offer the possibility to get a better picture of an audience's response to an advertisement, which could be useful in determining how it could contribute to public discourse on environmental issues. In this way, this project should be seen as paving the way for further studies to be done, moving forward with the findings of this project, perhaps into more research into the reception of such as advertisements in future.

In terms of ethical issues, this research does not directly involve any human participants, meaning that ethical considerations were minimised. Related to the above issues of coder bias, ideas of ethics can in fact pose something of a problem for this method of analysis. Critical discourse analysis has historically been criticised as a method for being overly moralistic (Graham, 2016). This would result in findings being less reliable as a result of a "cavalier approach" to data, in the pursuit of a conclusion that serves a moralising agenda of the project (Tyrwhitt-Drake, 1999; p. 1081). With a topic as already politically charged as climate change now linked in this project by "Slow Violence" to issues of global inequality, this was certainly an issue to be aware of in the recording of findings (Nixon 2011, Yearley 1991). While there remains some debate over the validity of such criticisms, an awareness of such issues was important – this is discussed briefly in the conclusion of this project (Graham, 2016, 2018; Van Dijk, 1993).

As this section has argued, the chosen methods were the most useful because they provided the tools to produce an in-depth reading of the texts present, with an awareness of their potential limitations (Rose, 2012). By making use of methods that allow the findings of

this project to be readily compared to those of previous studies, this project thus makes a logical, if minor, addition to current scholarship on the area.

Findings and analysis

In this section, advertisements appearing in two campaigns in British publications in the past ten years are analysed. For comparative and contextual purposes, other promotional materials are referred to – these can be found attached as appendices at the end of this project. Later discussion makes links between these findings and the literature.

Figure 1: Apple advertisement, 2014. Published in: various.

Text recreated: *There's one area where we actually encourage others to imitate us. Because when everyone makes the environment a priority, we all benefit. We'd be more than happy to see every data centre fuelled by 100% renewable energy sources. And we eagerly await the day when every product is made without the harmful toxins we have removed from ours. Of course we know we can continue to do better. We've set some pretty ambitious goals for reducing out impact on climate*

change, making our products with greener materials and conserving our planet's limited resources. So the next time we come across a great idea that can help leave the world better than we found it, we look forward to sharing it.

How harmony is conveyed visually:

The above advertisement, produced by Apple in 2014 features row upon row of solar panels, beneath a sweeping blue sky that dominates over half the image. The solar panels denote sustainable behaviour. The beauty of nature is emphasised, as in other cases (see appendices 7 and 10). Green grass and trees frame the human-made structures, with no humans in sight. The sense created by this image is one of harmony between humans and nature. At the centre of it all is Apple – the viewers' eye is drawn down the centre of the image towards the apple logo in between the rows of solar panels, and this creates the direct connotative association between environmentally sustainable behaviour and Apple the company. Produced to coincide with World Earth Day in 2014, the ideological links being made between Apple as a brand and "being green" are made explicit in its anchored message, as well as its composition and signifying elements.

A sense of scale:

Heightening this effect is the sheer sense of scale created. The viewer looks on into the distance, with the solar panels stretching out as far as the eye can see. This at once creates the sense that Apple is firstly making very large contributions to environmental efforts as should, its consumers, and secondly a more abstract sense of possibility. With Apple, the future is within our grasp, and it is a benign, safe one, as suggested by the warm glow of the sun, and the overall sense of harmony between the human-made and the natural.

It has been mentioned in previous chapters of this project how there are some key differences in the ways different institutions make use of environmental discourse. Figure 2 shows an example of a campaign advertisement from the World Wide Fund for Nature in

2009. Though the image makes use of some of the same features of Apple's advert, certain key differences create a contrasting message. The focus here is not on future possibilities, but on the real consequences of human activity on the Earth.

Firstly, the same sense of scale is employed, with the image of the natural world stretching out before the viewer – the high angle image means we look down on the Earth. However, what we see is not an idealised Eden-like image of nature. We see an area of rainforest, with a vast swathe of denuded trees, the brown of the soil contrasting healthy green of vegetation. Here, the sense of scale is applied to a problem, rather than the achievements of humankind.

Figure 2: WWF Advertisement, 2009. Published in: various.

Secondly, this image has been manipulated so that the rainforest takes the shape of a pair of lungs – so the message is that as we destroy our natural environment, we are in danger of destroying ourselves. Trees provide us with oxygen and lots of resources we need to survive, but in a more general sense, the destruction of the natural world is associated with the death of humankind. So rather than present an idealised view of our environment, in which a sense of positivity is conveyed, this advert takes the unreal and uses it to directly demonstrate the consequences of human activity on our planet, in a graphic and shocking way. It makes a direct threat to the viewer, telling them that significant damage has already

been done and that they are at further risk themselves if they do not act soon to fix it. Both of these adverts make icons of the natural landscapes they present – taking them to refer to the natural landscape in general (Rose, 2012).

A note on lighting and the sky:

The sky also features in Figure 2, but given the angle of the shot, it takes up far less of the image. Filled with clouds, it suggests something ominous, an oncoming storm for instance, which resonates in the mind of the viewer with the message found in the bottom-right of the image. "Before it's too late" acts as a warning that what we see in the image is just the beginning, and if we do not change our ways we risk the entire jungle being wiped out – in this way the image serves as an icon of nature generally (Rose, 2012). This would mean not only loss of habitat, but given the lung shape of the forested area, the end of all life. These associations with death are intended to galvanise the viewer into environmental action, or at least encourage them to visit the WWF website for more information on the topic. The darkness of the clouds, casting a shadow over the image, is key in suggesting this gloomy future – and is a stark contrast to the lighting found in Apple's advertisement (see Figure 1). The sky also features heavily in the advertisement featured in appendix 7. Here, it forms a unifying banner at the back of the frame, with nature surrounding and embracing the car at the center, with a similar effect to the Apple advert.

In Figure 1, at the centre of the image, a bright light shines out, engulfing the horizon and creating a "lens flare" effect that obscures the viewers' ability to see into the distance. This visual feature was also used by German car manufacturer BMW throughout their 2015 campaign introducing a new range of environmentally-friendly cars (see figures 3 and 4). This strategy can also be observed in appendices 8 and 10 – here the beams of light reach into the frame and towards the viewer.

This lighting has the effect of adding a warm glow to the image, heightening a sense of positivity and forward-thinking ideology. In Figure 3, we see how the light fills spaces in which humans and nature are in harmony: urban structures interspersed with trees and green spaces. On the periphery, we see people engaging in physical activity, connoting movement and natural strength. From the right hand sides of the frame, tree branches sweep across the image and nearly envelope the car. Nature is surrounding and protecting the car – the two are in harmony. In the reflections of the windows, we see greenery – it is placed at the centre of the image of the car. The diegesis here is focused on the car as being at one with nature. The BMW car may be at the centre of all this, tying together the harmony with nature, but it is the lighting that pervades the image and creates this positive atmosphere. A similar effect is achieved in Figure 1 – the light from the sun, spilling over the horizon, bathes the scene in a welcoming glow. Though it obscures vision, preventing us form seeing ahead, the positivity it creates is much the same as the messages in Figure 3. The light creates connotations with a positive future that may be unclear, but undoubtedly positive. Combined with the large scale of the wide angle framing, the diegesis and narrative of this image is one of longevity – we are being presented with Apple's vision of the future, one of happiness, and forward thinking, though not a clearly defined one.

Figure 4 BMW advertisement banners, 2015. Published in: The Telegraph

Textual anchoring, and context

The textual anchoring of Apple's ad shifts the focus away from any negativity associated with consumption. While there are many claims of upholding green practices, in general the tone of the ad focuses more on the practices of other agents than their own. In this way it serves to challenge the viewer to consider their own environmental practice. This is one of the key ways in which this advert promotes green ideology. BMW's advertising campaign text emphasises its messages: "Lead the charge" and "Some fear change. Others drive it". The puns of a "charge" in an electric car, and the idea of "driving" change directly associates buying this car with ideology of progress and dynamism, as well as green sustainability. It also shifts the focus on to the consumer, at once extolling the virtues of green behaviour and challenging the consumer to follow suit. The viewer is given a choice – to be a part of positive change by joining with BMW, or to choose fear. In appendices 8 and 10, textual anchoring refers to the need for change ("It's not nature that should adapt", "Not all water is yours"). These messages focus on discourses of a relationship between humankind and nature where the two are equal.

In appendices 7 and 8, nature and the associated come into contact, while in figures 3 and 4, as well as appendix 10, we see nature and mankind appearing together in harmony. In contrast, in Figures 2 and 5, we see animals used are taken as icons for nature and they are shown in uncomfortable or unnatural positions of suffering (Rose, 2012). The rhino finds itself contorted, squeezed and suffocating in a plastic bottle. Meanwhile in Figure 5, bottles themselves are given life and replace fish swimming through the sea. Humankind's influence is made manifest in these images. By disrupting our visual expectations, these images force the viewer to consider the effects humans have on nature. The connotative meanings of the animals either being replaced, or put into unnatural situations – the majesty or beauty of nature - being disrupted is intended to cause realisations in the viewer of the damage humans are doing. Here clear links are made between human consumption and its consequences. Meanwhile, in institutional corporate examples of advertising these are not present at all.

Figure 5: Greenpeace campaign material, 2014. Self-published

Discussion

This section links the findings of the analysis in the previous sections with the literature that influenced it, and discusses how this project has contributed to the discussion, by advancing some of the analysis of previous studies (Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006). Key themes are discussed, as well as limitations to the study.

The results of reading visual discourses

The findings of this project overall reflect those of previous studies, at least initally. The use of images of natural landscapes and features to construct our environment finds them often finds them without a grounding in the real world, and therefore decontextualized and aestheticized, as found by Hansen and Machin (2008). The combination of connotative positive messages shown in Figures 1 and 3, alongside textual anchoring encouraging sustainable consumption reveals the ideologies behind these discourses of the environment

In 2008, Hansen and Machin noted in particular that their analysis of images found emerging themes of social goals of teamwork and rivalry, desire for progress and dynamism, states of mental and physical wellbeing, and freedom (p. 791). These discourses were similarly found in the ways Apple and BMW construct their reproductions of the natural world (Ivakhiv, 2013). In contrast to how Cottle (2000) found the iconicized landscapes in television coverage to be under threat, we see an emerging pattern in landscapes as being associated with discourses of safety and bounty, as institutions make use of existing connotations of nature as beautiful and natural, again supporting past claims (Hansen and Machin, 2008).

A few themes emerge in the visual discourses of the environment, in terms of signifiers. Across a number of examples, the wide use of golden lighting (see Figures 1, 3 and 4, Appendices 8 and 10) is particularly notable, as well wide - angle shots (FIgure. Framing these landscapes in a positive way, this heavily contributes to how these landscapes are aestheticized and made into narrative spaces (Christensen et al., 2018) of pro-consumer ideology (Linder, 2006). It is in this way that they are imbued with ideologies

of generalised positivity towards consumption, combined with their anchoring. Similarly, a number of texts made use of wide angled shots and green tones (See appendices 7, 8, and 10) to convey a sense of plentiful nature. The ideology behind this suggested by Hansen and Machin (2008), that nature is a plentiful, benign entity with which communion should be sought. In this study, often it is the institutions themselves that are directly associated with access to nature, through connoted ideologies (Hartmann et al., 2015).

Complicating ideologies

As Diprose et al. (2017) argued, environmental and social justice frames remain peripheral in much newspaper reporting, while discourses promoting consumption take centre stage. This is certainly reflected in the textual anchoring of the advertisements studied, where the focus is kept firmly on consumption, with green virtues employed but little focus given to the damage caused by the promotion being consumed. Findings by Hansen and Machin (2008) and Linder (2006) are therefore supported. As Hansen and Machin (2013) argue, it is also important to consider the context of visual texts – however, if Diprose et al's research is to be believed, then ideological or political leanings of the newspapers published should have no influence upon the messages of the ads contained within them.

Textual anchoring in both print advertising campaigns featured messages that encouraged green behaviour as long as it was carried out while still consuming the products of the company. The challenges both to consumers and rival organisations found in figures 1 and 3 reflect Hansen and Machin's (2008) findings that "rivalry" is a common theme in green advertising.

With past analysis of advertising in mind, it can be argued then that these texts, by promoting ideologies and discourses of sustainable consumption (Diprose et al, 2017; Hansen and Machin, 2008; Linder, 2006), move the focus and framing of environmental issues away from the anthropogenic damage of this consumption. They can also therefore be said to passively contribute, to an extent, to sustaining slow violence (Hansen and

Machin, 2008; Nixon, 2011). This dissertation has therefore contributed to the conversation on mediating climate change by confirming the hypotheses of Hansen and Machin, as well as Linder (2006), that green print advertising, as a discursive practice, recontextualises images of the natural world for use in advertising.

However, by suggesting that these recent forms of advertising present a more instructive discourse of "imbricated" relationship between humans and nature (Doyle, 2011 p. 158), this project has also contradicted and complicated assumptions about the ideology behind the production of these advertisements. Doyle (2011) points out that past campaigns by environmental organisations such as Greenpeace presented problematic discourses that positioned humankind and nature as in a hierarchical relationship. Whereas advertisements by non-governmental organisations often focus on disruption of natural landscapes with human damage, ads by Apple and BMW frame humankind's relationship as one in which active human participation can be a good thing (Linder 2006). This is reflected in appendices 8 and 10 – harmony between humankind and the natural world is emphasised in the arrangement of visual signs and text anchorage. Humankind is iconicized in the form of the figures at the centre of the frame, in appendix 10 appearing as an indigenous person appearing, evoking a "primitive" way of life close to nature. In appendix 8, the old car forms a home for an owl – participation in consumption is shown to have possible benefits for nature, which is positioned as equal by the anchorage of text putting the onus to change practices on humankind.

Apple and BMW, major technology and car manufacturers respectively, are likely to be among the chief contributors to pollution. But accusations of greenwashing aside (Short, 2012), these advertisements arguably present far more useful discourses of sustainability, even though this may not necessarily be their intent (Linder, 2006). It is difficult to comment on the intentions of the producers of these advertisements, but it would seem that the discourses they sustain, though focused on promoting consumption, do encapsulate a sense

of sustainability that makes them more instructive on long-term green behaviour than their supposedly more activist, NGO-produced counterparts.

The extent to which the results of these findings are reliable should therefore be treated with some caution. Furthermore, such a small sample means that one should not be too hasty to make generalised claims about all environmental discourses in media (Silverman, 2010). However, given the relatively small number of texts available to analyse, it can be said that these results arguably reflect print advertising's recent employment of environmental images at the very least. In this way, this project makes a valid contribution to our overall understanding of how visual mediations of our environment play into public understanding and discourse of environmental issues, albeit with limitations.

Conclusion: How does print advertising in newspapers make use of and contribute to the framing and public understanding of environmental issues?

In conclusion, this project has explored the ways in which green advertisements found in news publications could be said to contribute to the framing and public understanding of environmental issues in the United Kingdom. Advertising campaigns in print were found to feature the use of recontextualised images of natural scenes and discourses that promote ideologies that nature is beautiful and plentiful, and safe from threat (Hansen and Machin, 2008). As well as creating positive associations with the institutions they promote, they also featured an emphasis on discourses promoting an ideology of positivity towards consumption without guilt or anxiety over climate change.

In this sense they make use of existing framings of environmental issues to market their products, initially showing little difference in results compared with previous studies (Hansen and Machin; 2008, 2013; Linder 2006). They could furthermore be said to then contribute to the framing and public understanding of climate change by sustaining these discourses; which distance the consumer from environmental issues, and thereby disempower them to take action to address these issues (Doyle, 2011; Hansen and Machin, 2013). By maintaining the focus upon the beauty of the natural world and its availability as a resource rather than the real temporal and spatial sites of the effects of consumption upon the environment, these advertisements arguably also further contribute to the "slow violence" of globalised capitalism (Nixon, 2011). Perhaps this should come as no surprise as these advertisements are primarily intended to promote the interests of their institutions, with environmental concerns taking a back seat. Furthermore, as Hansen and Machin suggest, this decontextualisation also serves to distract from the "concrete processes" of capitalism (2013; p. 156). However, given the power these texts wield when it comes to shaping our

understanding of the world around us, this should perhaps be seen as a more urgent problem (Ivakhiv, 2013; Nixon, 2011).

Nonetheless, the findings of this project also noted that many of these advertisements also promoted discourses in which humankind's relationship with nature is "imbricated and mutually interdependent" (Doyle 2011, p.158). This is in contrast to the findings of previous analyses of mediations of climate change, which favoured the spectacular and dramatic (Boykoff, 2008; Hansen and Machin, 2013; Nixon, 2011). In particular, this applies to adverts produced by non-governmental organisations, whose advertisements by comparison often present a problematic relationship between humankind and nature, in which the two are clearly divided, hierarchically and in disharmony (Doyle, 2011). In this sense, the corporate advertising strategies observed could be said to be more instructive on how mankind should act towards its environment than their NGO-produced counterparts (ibid., 2011, Crompton, 2012). While discourses of neo-liberalism and consumerism have previously promoted inaction on climate change, perhaps we are beginning to see a shift towards a more engaging, empowering message (Doyle 2011, p. 157). This shift in discourse could also perhaps be attributed to companies noting the skepticism of many consumers towards green advertising, as awareness of environmental issues has grown in recent years (Zinkhan and Carlson, 2013). With these latter findings in mind, this project thus concludes on a slightly more hopeful note.

This project has also recorded several emerging themes in its findings, through its analyses of visual discourses. A pattern was observed in the repeated use of golden light, and heavy use of green tones. These are often framed from a distance, with a wide angle to convey a sense of a large-scale, and grand perspective. Discourses of dynamism and forward-thinking attitudes also commonly emerged in textual analysis. This could be a potential area for further study in the future, as more research could increase our understanding of visual signifiers associated with environmentalism – moving towards the

development of a visual lexicon or typology of environmental communication (Cottle, 2000; Hansen and Machin, 2013).

Reflections and further studies

That this latter finding was somewhat unexpected reflects a potential flaw in the research process. As noted in the methodology section, this project may have suffered from coder bias, which perhaps goes some way to explaining the unexpected nature of some of the observations. Perhaps a drive to expose the harmful practices of corporations clouded my objectivity as a researcher to an extent. Given past critiques of critical discourse analysis as being overly motivated by a moralising thrust, it is possible that my own expectations and personal bias going into the research skewed initial analysis, though the balanced findings ultimately reflect an overall neutrality (Graham, 2016).

This project could also potentially be improved by focusing on a broader range of texts, to give a more representative sample consumed by a wider audience receiving them. It would be especially valuable for this to involve the incorporation of texts from non-Western contexts and cultures, as this is an area that continues to go under-represented in past environmental communications research, as well as in the field of media and communications studies in general (Schafer and Schlichting, 2014).

As Hansen and Machin wrote in 2013, there is great potential for further work to be done on the effects upon audiences of visual communications of the environment (ibid. 2013, p. 164). And with the findings of this project suggesting a potentially emergent form of advertising discourse that is more effective for engaging receivers with environmental issues; further research exploring this avenue of environmental communication in particular could be valuable. A comparative investigation into how different advertisements are received by their audience could strengthen the claims of this project. As mentioned previously in this conclusion, further studies, in the mould of Cottle's 2000 study, pursuing the idea of a visual typology of environmental communication in advertising could also

further our understanding of how audiences engage with such texts (Hansen and Machin, 2013).

This project has drawn together critical conversations from the study of environmental issues in visual media and in advertising discourse. Importantly, it has to an extent bridged a gap and linked the two by merging research in both fields to demonstrate how print advertising contributes to the framing and public understanding of environmental issues. Furthermore, as mentioned above, it has also revealed how there is still much more research needed in both fields. The field of environmental communication studies is one that is still developing, and just as we are yet to learn what the future holds for our environment, there is still much to discover here (Doyle, 2011).

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Appendices

Attached are five adverts published in newspapers, analysed above in the findings section, along with three examples of self-published adverts by non-governmental organisations, for comparison. All of the below images were accessed in the advertising archives *coloribus.com/adsarchive* and *adsoftheworld.com*. Ethics approval form on last page.

- **Appendix 1: Apple. 2014. "*There are some ideas we want every company to copy". Published in: The Times, Metro, The Guardian.***

- **Appendix 2: World Wide Fund for Nature. 2008. "*Before it's too late*". Published by WWF.**

- **Appendix 3: BMW. 2015.** *"Lead the charge".* **Published in:** *The Telegraph.*

- **Appendix 4: BMW. 2015. I3 advertising campaign companion half-page image. Published in:** *The Telegraph.*

- **Appendix 6: Greenpeace. 2014.** *"The Greatest Wonder Of The Sea".* **Published by Greenpeace.**

- **Appendix 7: Volkswagen. 2008.** *"GT TSI - High Performance, Low Emissions".* **Published in: various.**

High performance, low emissions. Golf GT TSI.

- **Appendix 8: Skoda. 2010. *"It's Not Nature Who Should Adapt".* Published in: various.**

- **Appendix 9: World Wide Fund for Nature. 2013. *"Time Is Running Out For Them".* Published by WWF.**

Time is running out for them,
not for plastic.

Be a responsible tourist. Get involved today.

- **Appendix 10: Coleman. 2011.** *"Not All Water Is Yours"*

  Published in: *Metro.*